

Appln. No. 10/716,260
Amendment
Reply to Final Office Action dated August 1, 2005

Docket No. 7202-48

REMARKS

The foregoing amendments and these remarks are in response to the Final Office Action dated August 1, 2005. This amendment is timely filed.

At the time of the Office Action, claims 1-9 and 11-13 were pending. In the Office Action, claims 1-3, 7 and 8 were objected to for informalities. Claims 3, 4 and 9 were objected to under 37 CFR 1.75(c). Claims 5 and 11 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph. Claims 1-4, 6, 8, 9 and 12 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b). Claims 7 and 13 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a). The objections and rejections are discussed in more detail below.

I. Claim Objections

Claims 1-3, 7 and 8 were objected to for informalities listed in the Office Action. The claims have been amended herein in accordance with the Examiner's suggestions. Claims 3, 4 and 9 were objected to under 37 CFR 1.75(c), as being of improper dependent form for failing to further limit the subject matter of a previous claim. Claims 3, 4 and 9 are duly cancelled herein. Withdrawal of the objections is thus respectfully requested.

II. Rejections to the claims under 35 U.S.C. §112

Claims 5 and 11 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicant regards as the invention. Claims 5 has been amended to depend from claim 1, and claim 11 is cancelled herein. Withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

III. Rejections to the claims based upon Art

Claims 1-4, 6, 8, 9 and 12 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Japanese Patent No. 2000-178925 to Tesac Corp. ("Tesac Corp."). Claims 8, 9 and 12 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 2,079,034 to Parkin ("Parkin"). Claims 7 and 13 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over

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Tesac Corp. in view of U.S. Patent No. 1,781,458 to Gore ("Gore"). Claim 13 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Parkin in view of Gore.

The Office Action asserts that claim 1 is anticipated by Tesac Corp., figure 10b of which is reproduced in the Office Action, and asserts further that dimension A is approximately $\frac{4}{3}$ of the diameter of ropes 3,4. Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection because, according to Applicant's calculations, A appears to be approximately 1.6 times the diameter of ropes 3,4. In claim 1 of the present application, the h/d ratio is claimed to be in the range between 1 and $\frac{4}{3}$ (or 1.33) and therefore the value of 1.6 by Tesac Corp. lies outside the upper end of this range.

Moreover, in the knot by Tesac Corp., the two ropes do not lie on the same plane. It follows that rope 3 in the knot of Tesac Corp. suffers from the drawback that it can slide with respect to rope 4, whenever it overcomes friction resistance. On the contrary, in the present application, because of the reduction in overall thickness of the two ropes to 1 to $\frac{4}{3}$ of the rope diameter, the ropes are forced to lie substantially in the same plane at each knot, as explained on page 5, lines 12-16 of the application. This feature achieves the advantage that the method of claim 1 prevents any sliding of one rope with respect to the other, in the knot.

The above-mentioned advantage is achieved by virtue of the fact that the knot of the application has the features disclosed on page 4 lines 8-11 of the application: the two U elements 7 and 8 are positioned side by side astride the first rope 2, with their wings equally oriented in the direction 2-2, in substance adjacent, at a reciprocal distance approximately equal to d, so that they lie close to the second rope 3 on opposite sides thereof. This feature is totally absent in Tesac Corp.'s knot, where the U elements 16a are at a distance of about three times the diameter of the rope. The independent claims have been amended to more clearly claim this feature, and it is believed that claims 1, 2 and 8 are thus not anticipated or rendered obvious by Tesac Corp.

For the foregoing reasons, claims 1, 2 and 8 are thus believed to be in condition for allowance. The dependent claims are also believed allowable because of their dependence upon allowable base claims, and because of the further features recited.

New claims 14 and 15 are added herein, relating to the feature disclosed on page 4 lines 5-7 that the curvature of the curved bases 7a, 8a is semicircular, with an intrados radius R being approximately one half the rope diameter d. This feature is totally absent in Tesac Corp.'s knot,

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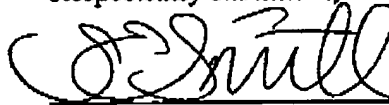
where the U elements 16a have an intrados radius which is approximately one and a half times the diameter of the ropes. By virtue of this further feature, the two ropes are very tightly and firmly secured by the knot, in a way that leaves no undesirable gaps or spaces which, on the contrary, are responsible for making the knot of Tesac Corp. so vulnerable. Claims 14 and 15 are thus also believed to be in condition for allowance.

IV. Conclusion

Applicants have made every effort to present claims which distinguish over the prior art, and it is thus believed that all claims are in condition for allowance. Nevertheless, Applicants invite the Examiner to call the undersigned if it is believed that a telephonic interview would expedite the prosecution of the application to an allowance. In view of the foregoing remarks, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and prompt allowance of the pending claims.

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Respectfully submitted,



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